

JANUARY • MARCH 2005

# MARINES GOUGE

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## ON POINT

**AN NAJAF, Iraq** — An Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq worker salutes a Marine from the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit before boarding a Marine C-130 Hercules cargo plane here Jan. 26. The Marine, along with other members of his unit, provided the election workers with food, water and transportation to numerous polling stations across the country for the Jan. 30 elections. The Iraqis shook hands and thanked the Marines repeatedly during their time under Marine protection.

*Photo by Sgt. Nathan K. LaForte*

# SEMPER FIDELIS

### ▲ Navy and Marine Corps pilots

spend numerous hours in simulators learning to fly the aircraft organic to their branches of service. Many, like the F/A-18 simulator shown here, are common and both services train in them. Learn more about Marine Corps flight simulators on page 16.

*Photo courtesy of L-3 Communications*



“The Marine Corps only helps those who help themselves. If you’re not goal oriented and set goals for yourself, then you’re just sitting on the sidelines.”

— Staff Sgt. Roger W. King  
a Gravette, Ark., native, said after  
he re-enlisted March 11 while  
deployed to Al Asad, Iraq.

# GOUGE

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## MARINES

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### NEW STAFF CONTRIBUTOR

Sgt. Clinton Firstbrook



**S**hown here during Operation Al Fajr, the November 2004 battle for Fallujah, Iraq, is the newest member of *Marines* staff.

He enlisted in the Corps Aug. 31, 2000, and entered recruit training June 10, 2001. Upon graduating from the Defense Information School as a combat correspondent, the 24-year-old Jeffers, Minn.,

native served as a broadcaster at AFN Iwakuni, Japan. A year later, he joined the Division of Public Affairs as a part of the Community Relations office.

He volunteered for duty in Iraq, and in September 2004, found himself in Baghdad, working at the Combined Press Information Center.

He saw his “fair share of mortar attacks and convoy patrols” as he traveled around the country writing about all the services, but Operation Al Fajr was his first experience with real combat, he said.

On that first night in Fallujah, “when the Amtrak doors opened and everyone ran out I didn’t even think of trying to take pictures. All I wanted to do was find cover.” By morning, he had garnered a new respect from infantry Marines and throughout his remaining months in country covered many aspects of the infantrymen’s lives.

He says his time in Iraq has changed him. “The little things I would run into that used to get me upset no longer bother me. Compared to what I could be dealing with, they aren’t important in the least.”

You can read some of Firstbrook’s reports from Iraq at [www.marines.mil](http://www.marines.mil), keyword “Firstbrook.”



### On the Cover

**21st Century Warriors** — The battle attire and weapons used by today’s Marines are a far cry from what Marines wore in 1775. Gone are the wool overcoats and field scarves, replaced by modern digital camouflage and automatic weapons. See what else Marines use in the fight against terrorism on page 10.

Illustration by Seth Sirbaugh,  
Bates Creative Group

# MARINES SOUND OFF

## Adapt and Overcome

**T**HROUGHOUT MARINE CORPS HISTORY, CRITICS HAVE tried to eliminate us, claiming that the Army or the Navy could preform our missions. As such, we’ve had to defend ourselves against numerous abolishment attempts.

President Andrew Jackson recommended to Congress that the Corps be absorbed into the Army in 1829 – a suggestion that found favor with then Secretary of the Navy John Branch.

About this same time, we were proving our fighting ability during engagements in Quallah Battoo against Malays. Perhaps reports of our valor influenced Congress, for it passed an act in 1834 that firmly established us as a separate service within the Department of the Navy.

Our right to exist as a service was again questioned in 1908 by President Theodore Roosevelt who felt the Corps should be merged into the Army and that “no vestige of their organization should be allowed to remain.”

Again Congress disagreed.

In 1946, Senate bill S. 2044 proposed the unification of the armed forces. The bill would have severely reduced the Corps’ effectiveness as a fighting organization.

In his ‘No Bended Knee’ speech to the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs May 6, 1946, Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. Alexander Vandegrift spoke vehemently against this bill, citing the Corps contributions in World War II and our role as the “primary force in readiness” as proof of our value to the nation.

After much debate, the Corps again survived. The National Security Act of 1947 unified the services under the Department of Defense, but defined us as the “fleet marine forces of combined arms, together with supporting air components, for service with the fleet in the seizure or defense of advanced naval bases, and for the conduct of such land operations as may be essential to the prosecution of a naval campaign.”

Our reluctance to go away quietly combined with our adaptability and forward thinking fighting skills justify our continued existence.

Today, we continue “to adapt and overcome” and this is an essential ingredient in our success. We hone our skills in anticipation of new enemies and battlegrounds and our adaptability ensures Marines are protecting America for generations to come.

As cities continue to become the common battleground, we fight the “three-block war” and further develop the leadership skills of our junior Marines. We focus on expeditionary warfare and can now strike far inland from bases at sea.

This issue of *Marines* looks at our ability to adapt and overcome and the technology and ideas being developed to help new generations of Marines fight on the battlefields of the future. **M**

Semper Fi,  
*Marines*



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